

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-14 (Cancelled).

15 (Currently amended). A method for ~~characterizing,~~ identifying or screening a candidate therapeutic agent for ~~psoriasis an inflammatory dermal disease,~~ comprising contacting a ~~phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> comprising the polypeptide of claim 1~~ polypeptide having phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> activity with a test substance, ~~and,~~ assaying an inhibitory action of the test substance on the phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> activity of the polypeptide, and determining, to determine inhibition of on the phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> activity, wherein the polypeptide is an isolated and purified polypeptide selected from the following (a) or (b):

(a) a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:9; or

(b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing under stringent condition with a complement of a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8, where hybridization under stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing under a temperature condition of 50 to 65°C for about 16 hours in 6xSSC or in a hybridization solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto, pre-washing in 6xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto if needed, and thereafter washing in 1xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto.

16 (Currently amended). The method according to claim 15, wherein the action of the test substance is assayed by carrying out an enzymatic reaction in a reaction system comprising the polypeptide having phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> activity, a substrate for the phospholipase A<sub>2</sub>, and the test substance, and assaying an inhibitory action ~~for~~ on the enzymatic activity of the phospholipase A<sub>2</sub>.

17 (Original). The method according to claim 16, wherein the substrate is a glycerophospholipid, and the enzymatic activity is an activity for hydrolyzing an ester bond at 2-position of the glycerophospholipid.

Claims 18-21 (Cancelled).

22 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 15, wherein the inflammatory dermal disease is a chronic intractable dermal disease.

23 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 15, wherein the inflammatory dermal disease is psoriasis.

24 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 15, wherein the test substance is a compound which has not been known as an inhibitor for the phospholipase A<sub>2</sub>.

Claims 25-26 (Cancelled).

27 (Currently amended). ~~An examination~~ A diagnostic method for psoriasis, ~~characterized by which comprises~~ assaying an expression level of a gene ~~encoding the polypeptide of claim 1~~ for in a biological sample collected from a human ~~or non-human~~

animal individual, wherein said gene encodes a polypeptide having phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> activity selected from the following (a) or (b):

(a) a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:9; or

(b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing under stringent condition with a complement of a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8, where hybridization under stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing under a temperature condition of 50 to 65°C for about 16 hours in 6xSSC or in a hybridization solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto, pre-washing in 6xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto if needed, and thereafter washing in 1xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto.

28 (Currently amended). The ~~examination~~ diagnostic method according to claim 27, wherein the expression level is assayed using a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing with a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8 under stringent conditions, or a complement thereof as a probe or primer.

29 (Currently amended). The ~~examination~~ diagnostic method according to claim 28, wherein the probe or primer is a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:4 or a complement thereof.

Claim 30 (Cancelled).